

# Plan now THE 'MUST-GO' DESTINATIONS FOR 2010

## SPRING

Following the opening in late 2009 of Le Gray and the Four Seasons, **Beirut** will hope to capitalise on the relative stability of Lebanon and regain the status it enjoyed until 1975 as the playground of the Middle East ... **Amsterdam** has become a more convenient short-break destination with the completion of the high-speed rail track from Brussels, where trains connect with Eurostar. The city's big attractions in 2010 will be the *Pioneers of Modern Art* show at the Hermitage Amsterdam (from 6 March; [www.hermitage.nl](http://www.hermitage.nl)) and the reopening in the summer of the Stedelijk museum of modern and contemporary art ([www.stedelijkindestad.nl](http://www.stedelijkindestad.nl)) ... **Utah** has a couple of attractions which will remain when the 2009/10-season snow has melted in the ski resorts: the new Amanresort, Amangiri, out in the wilderness of Canyon Point ([www.amanresorts.com](http://www.amanresorts.com)), and alcohol, now freely available in **Utah** after a change in state law ... Among major holiday destinations, **Morocco** looks like the place to be. Marrakech has recently seen important hotels open and reopen – see page 69 for our review of the revamped La Mamounia. New EasyJet and Ryanair routes to Agadir will also open destinations to the south, among them the much-

talked-up coastal town of Mirleft ... With the Turkish lira still a bargain, **Istanbul** is likely to grow further in popularity, propelled by its status as one of this year's European Capitals of Culture ... And culture is also the strong suit of **Rome**, which will see the opening of its MAXXI museum complex this spring.

## SUMMER

The football World Cup in **South Africa**, from 11 June to 11 July, is the biggest event of the summer. The ➤ 10 venues are widely spread: the distance between the stadiums of Cape Town and Johannesburg, the event's main hub, is more than 1,250km. Canny fans aiming to do the World Cup in style might choose to stay in Mozambique, perhaps at the reopened Azura on Benguerra ([www.azura-retreats.com](http://www.azura-retreats.com)), and commute to Johannesburg – it's a two-hour direct flight – for the matches ... The rival international event, Expo 2010, runs right through from May to October in **Shanghai**, where the obvious place to stay will be the legendary Peace Hotel, reopening in mid-2010 after a lengthy 'revitalisation' by Fairmont Hotels & Resorts ([www.fairmont.com/promo/peacehotel](http://www.fairmont.com/promo/peacehotel)) ... Although **Croatia** is becoming increasingly popular, the island of Solta remains unscathed by mass tourism, despite being only a half-hour ferry ride from Split. Go this summer, though,

because a revolving hotel and a marina are planned ... A major tourism initiative in the Peloponnese in **Greece** is already under way, and the first phase (including a Westin resort) opens in May on the Costa Navarino (see [www.costanavarino.com](http://www.costanavarino.com) and turn to page 150 for sustainable developments in the area) ... It probably won't be overwhelmed, but **Papua New Guinea** can expect more visitors this summer, thanks to the BBC's popular *Lost Land of the Volcano* series.

## AUTUMN

For a sunshine break head to **Dubai**, which by the end of the year will have two new 'fashion hotels'. The Armani Hotel Dubai ([www.armanihotels.com](http://www.armanihotels.com)), set within the Burj Dubai tower, is due to open in the spring; it will be followed in late 2010 by the Palazzo Versace ([www.palazzoversace.ae](http://www.palazzoversace.ae)), in the Culture Village of Dubai Creek ... Latin America's upward curve continues. This year's barefoot-chic choice is **Nicaragua**, which now has its first boutique hotel, the Contempo inland from Managua ([www.contempohb.com](http://www.contempohb.com)), and a burgeoning surf scene on the Pacific coast. A more upmarket alternative is **Uruguay**, with the new boutique hotel La Solana ([www.lasolana.com.uy](http://www.lasolana.com.uy)) just west of Punta del Este and, about 20km to the north-east in José Ignacio, the beach property of Estancia Vik ([www.estanciavikjoseignacio.com](http://www.estanciavikjoseignacio.com)), which opens in January

(see page 48 for more on José Ignacio) ... A destination set for a major comeback is **Sri Lanka**, thanks in large part to its recent stability. All the stylish properties, from the Reef beach villa in Wadduwa ([www.reefvilla.com](http://www.reefvilla.com)) to the Amanresorts, will reap a peace dividend.

## WINTER

Skiers will see big changes in the **Colorado** resorts for the 2010/11 season: at Snowmass, one of the four ski mountains of Aspen, the base village should see the opening of the five-star Little Nell Residences; Vail will have a new Four Seasons hotel, only the third in a ski destination; and the venerable Denver ski train, which ceased shuttling skiers to Winter Park last season, is expected to be revived ... Visitors to the glorious Freycinet Peninsula on **Tasmania** this winter will be able to stay in equally beautiful accommodation: the spa suites of the Saffire resort, on Great Oyster Bay ([www.saffire-freycinet.com.au](http://www.saffire-freycinet.com.au)) ... The stylish way to travel to **Antarctica** will be on *Le Boreal*, a 104-cabin expedition ship with the sleek look of a Russian oligarch's mega-yacht: it has been chartered by Abercrombie & Kent USA ([www.abercrombieandkent.com](http://www.abercrombieandkent.com)).

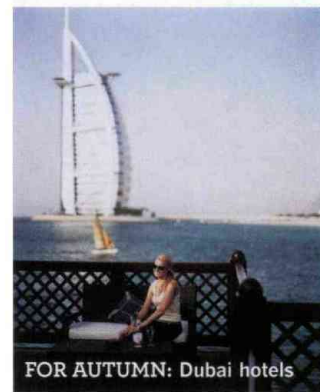
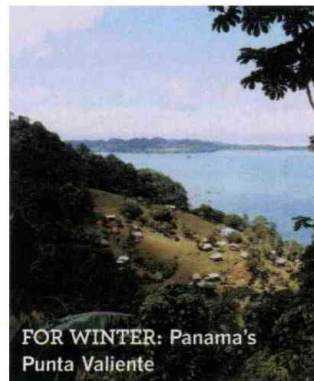
Agenda

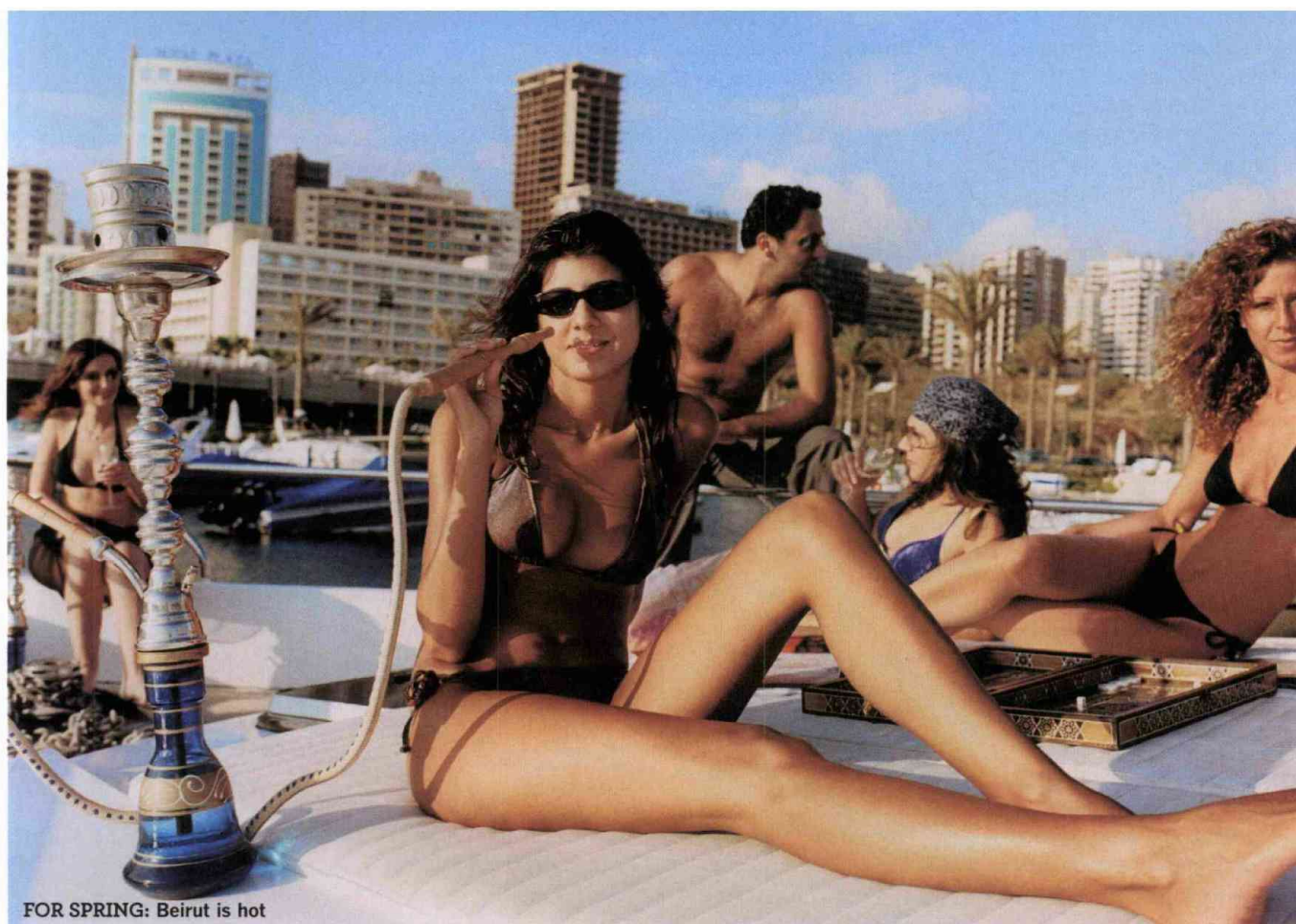




PHOTOGRAPHS: COSTA NAVARINO; KEN KOCHET, LIZ HASELL

com) for the 2010/11 Antarctic season ... According to tour operators to the region, the Latin American countries of choice for the winter will be **Panama**, already a hip beach destination, and **Peru**, where the development of coastal resorts has barely started. What is claimed to be its first beach/spa resort, the 120-room Paracas (www.libertador.com.pe) has just opened about 240km south of Lima.





FOR SPRING: Beirut is hot